Joints & Jivers

1978 Viral Game

$15

Today's weather:
Groovy

The Times

25¢

CHARLES MANSON ESCAPES FROM PRISON

MASS-MURDERER USED ORIENTAL TRICKERY; POLICE BAFFLE

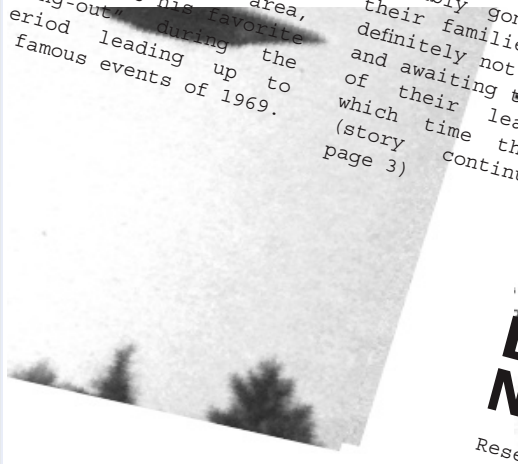
State Prison: Charles Manson, notorious cult leader and mass murderer, escaped from prison late last night. According to prison officials, the killer was able to overpower the guards, delivering a "round-house kick" to several of them at once. He then made his way down the hall, displaying a variety of martial arts maneuvers before punching a steel door open.

The governor has declared a state of emergency and all citizens are ordered to be on the lookout for this highly dangerous man.

Manson is believed to still be in the area, as this was his favorite "hang-out" during the period leading up to famous events of 1969.

As readers may remember, Manson led a group of followers, mostly young, impressionable, attractive, nubile girls. These pert young co-eds were believed to have been brainwashed by Manson to serve as his emissaries. After Manson's capture, his willowy young followers, many of whom didn't look a day over seventeen, scattered and have eluded authorities ever since.

A spokesman for the governor stated "We are confident that these zombie-like waifs have probably gone back to their families and are definitely not organized and awaiting the return of their leader, at which time they will (story continues on page 3)



Escaped killer Charles Manson, a.k.a. Chuck Manson, a.k.a. Charlie Manson, a.k.a. God

LOCAL PSYCHICS ANNOUNCE NEW UFO MIND CONTROL PLOT

Researchers at the local branch of the Extrasensory Gateway Group have issued a press release claiming that beings from Alpha Centauri are using their telepathic abilities to influence hapless humans into purchasing Ford Pintos.

EGG believes that this race of aliens influences cultures to engage in dangerous and destructive behavior with the hope that the society will [illegible] itself, becoming an [illegible] for conquest

Fred Sanders, owner of Fred's Fine Ford and Imports, denied the allegations, saying "We at Fred's Fine Ford and Imports believe that Pinto sales are up because people know this is a safe car, not because gromlocks from the second planet of Alpha Centauri, hailed be [illegible] as conquerers [illegible] feared

197X:	The Age of Funk.
d6:	A regular six-sided die.
Check:	Rolling dice to settle an argument.
Cool:	How square or far-out you are.
FunkMaster:	The dude (or chick) who referees the game. He gets the final say on anything, dig?
Honky:	Don't be one.
The Man:	He's workin' hard to keep a brother down.
Ride:	Your automobile, dummy.
Threds:	There's threads, and then there's Threds. One's what you wear, and one's how you live.

Joints & Jivers: Roleplaying in the Age of Funk

Score names created by Anonymous. Staredown, vehicle bar, archetype benefit and Cowboy concepts created by Funky Anon. Hippie Van, Pickup and Squaremobile concepts created by Amazing. Motorhead concept created by CaesarSalad and Viral. Silhouette artwork based on designs by Stanislav.

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Joints & Jivers

Handle

Crib Gig Wheels

Hair

Shades

Threds

Funk

Hip-Cattery

The Man — Far-out

Junker — Funker

Boogie -2 Boogie -1

Kung-fu Points	Groove Points	Freak-out Points	Wheelie Points

Funk
Funk - wounds

Tough
Shades + Threds

Boogie
Hair + Hip-Cattery

	Kung-fu Points	Groove Points	Freak-out Points	Wheelie Points
Funk	Attack: d6 + Funk (+ Kung-fu) vs. Tough		Maintain: d6 + Funk (+ Freak-out) vs. d6 + Funk	Drive: d6 + Funk (+ Wheelie) vs. d6 + Funk (+ Wheelie)
Tough	Outrun: d6 + Tough (+ Kung-fu) vs. d6 + Tough (+ Kung-fu)	Staredown: d6 + Tough (+ Groove) vs. d6 + Tough (+ Groove)		
Boogie		Dance-off: d6 + Boogie (+ Groove) vs. d6 + Boogie (+ Groove)		Cruise: d6 + Boogie (- Junker) (+ Wheelie) vs. d6 + Boogie (+ Wheelie)

Pieces

Name	Damage	Ammo	Special

Chapter 1:
Your bad-ass self

Handle: What do the smooth cats call you?
Crib: Where you lay your kicks and chicks.
Gig: Like, where's the bread comin' from?
Wheels: Your fly cherry ride.

Hair, Shades, and Threds

These can all change during the game. If your hair gets ruined and you don't have time to fix it, the FunkMaster might decide to lower your Hair score until you take a comb to it.

A bald dude can still have a fly Hair score if he keeps a solid 'stache. But if The Man takes away your shades, brother, you best believe your Shades score drops to 0 until you get 'em back.

The things you wear can change your scores. A buck-naked sucka has a 0 in both Shades and Threds. If you pick up some fly threds (or something else from Chapter 4) your score will go up.

Funk

Funk is something that can't be taken away. You might not feel so funky after gettin' shot, but funk is inside, you dig? You know players in this game are the funky-est cats on the planet. Funk is so important it's on the character sheet twice.

Hip-Cattery

Some brothers just got it. A hip cat can ease into any crowd. This score don't drop just because you do.

Scorin'

Hair:
Style is everything. When you want to turn a fine foxy chick on or dance circles around that sucka, stone cold players run a comb through their hair. Your Hair score adds to your Boogie rating (see the next page).

Shades:
If you want a dumb mother to know you're serious, nothing beats whipping off your shades and giving them a killer stare. They also add to your Tough rating.

Threds:
No doubt about it, threds are what separates the players from the squares. Your Threds score adds to your Tough rating. A set of superfly threds might even add to your Boogie rating too!

Starting characters get 6 points to put in Hair, Shades, and Threds.

A player that starts with a Threds score of 2 could be wearing Slick Threds, or Square Threds and a Cowboy Hat, or any other combination with a total Threds score of 2.

You don't have to pay for the Shades and Threds you start with, so if you can't wait to pick out your duds, check out Chapter 4. But listen up: ain't no player alive ever start with duds that gave five points of Threds.

You better have at least 1 point in Threds, sucka!

Funk:
How down with it you are. Your Funk score determines how much damage you can take, and how much you can dish out.

Hip-Cattery:
Being hip to the scene no matter where you are. This score also adds to your Boogie rating.

Starting characters get 6 points to put in Funk and Hip-Cattery.

Funk, Tough and Boogie Ratings

See those three big boxes marked Funk, Tough, and Boogie? Those are your ratings.

Whenever your character wants to do something far-out, you make a Funk, Tough, or Boogie check. You make a check by rolling a d6 and adding your Rating.

If you have any Kung-fu Points, Groove Points, Freak-out Points, or Wheelie Points, the FunkMaster might let you use them too. Check out Chapter 2 for more on those babies.

Funk

When you want to do something funky, like jump out a window or bust out some kung-fu, the FunkMaster will call on you to make a Funk check. You gotta roll a d6 and add your Funk rating. If you beat the other guy's Tough rating (or a number the FunkMaster decides on, if there isn't one already), you succeed.

Your Funk rating also shows how healthy you are. When you start, your Funk rating (the big square box) is the same as your Funk score (the small diamond). If you get injured, your Funk rating goes down, and Funk checks become harder. Once your Funk rating reaches zero, you are out of the game until you get patched up (in one week).

Every time one of your dice lands on a 6 during a Funk check, your Funk rating goes back up by 1. If you roll more than one 6 during a Funk check, you recover that many points to your Funk rating.

Don't get greedy, sucka: You can't gain a higher Funk rating than you would normally have.

Your Funk rating might also change if you acquire some superfly threds.

Tough

When someone attacks you, they roll a Funk check (a d6 plus their Funk rating) and try to get higher than your Tough rating. If their roll ties with your Tough rating or rolls under it, you're solid.

If they roll higher than your Tough rating, your Funk rating drops by one, sucka.

Your Tough rating also protects you from bullets: a weapon's damage has to be at least as high as your Tough rating or the bullets just breeze on by.

Another way to use Tough checks is to outrun someone (either gettin' away or runnin' after some punk). If somebody takes off, the chase-er and the chase-ee both roll Tough checks. Ties always go to the one being chased, so if you want to catch a dude on foot you best be rollin' high.

If someone's tryin' to run you down on the sidewalk in his stretch limousine, you roll a Tough check to run and he rolls a Funk check to drive your ass down. The FunkMaster might even let him spend some Wheelie Points to do it.

Boogie

When you need to get down at the disco or slide on in to a new scene, make a Boogie check.

If you're dancing with a fine mama, both of you roll a d6 and add your Boogie rating (plus any Groove Points either of you want to spend). If you roll higher, she falls for you. Just like always, tie goes to the defender (in this case, the fine mama).

You also roll Boogie checks if you're putting on a show with your wheels, either picking up foxes or showing off your custom pipes. Both cats roll Boogie checks; tie goes to the defender.

Chapter 2:
Kung-fu and Cadillacs

In the world of Joints & Jivers, anyone can use a gun. The ability to get down like those Far-Eastern cats sets you apart from the jive honkys.

If some bad-ass player takes a shot at you with a pistol, he rolls a d6 + his Funk score. If he tried to punch instead, he would get to add Kung-fu points.

If you're attacking with a melee weapon (like nunchucks or your bare fists) you can add Kung-fu points as well. You don't get to add Kung-fu points for shooting guns.

Other Actions

If you want to outrun someone, you both roll a d6 and add your Tough ratings (and any Kung-fu points you want to spend). The higher score wins. Tie goes to the person being chased.

If someone passes you a joint or slips you a Mickey, you best be making a Maintain check (d6 + your Funk rating). If you have any Freak-out points you can use them too.

The FunkMaster rolls a d6 and adds the Funk rating of whatever it is you just took. If your roll is higher, you keep yourself together. If you fail a Maintain check, the FunkMaster will let you know what happens.

If you wanna make some honky think twice about starting trouble you make a Staredown check, but if you wanna pick up some fly honeys with your slick wheels, better make that a Cruise check, baby.

Any other actions are settled using the Funk, Tough, or Boogie ratings. The FunkMaster decides which is appropriate, and what number you need to roll if it ain't already clear. For most rolls, the number you need is 8, but if that's too easy the FunkMaster can always jack it up.

What the hell are Kung-fu Points?

Shut your mouth and let me finish. Kung-fu, Groove, Freak-out and Wheelie points give you an extra edge when you need it.

Every point you spend gives you an extra d6 to roll during your next check. You can spend more than one point at one time.

If Curtis feels like his fist ain't funky enough, he can use a Kung-fu point to bust that honky in the chops. He would normally roll a d6 + his Funk rating, but if he spends a Kung-fu point he can roll another d6 on top of that.

Curtis can't decide to use a Kung-fu point after he swings- he needs to tell the FunkMaster before the attack.

These special points ain't free, though. Once you use 'em, they ain't comin' back until the FunkMaster says otherwise, you dig?

If the FunkMaster says you can use a Kung-fu, Groove, Freak-out or Wheelie point for a check, solid. If the FunkMaster calls you a jive sucka, forget it.

Different types of characters start the game with different numbers of special points. See Chapter 3 for more on that.

There's no limit to how many Kung-fu, Groove, Freak-out or Wheelie points the FunkMaster can pass around as rewards, but only the baddest and most funkadelic cats get more special points back than they spent at the end of a game.

Chapter 3:
Hustlers and Honkys

Every cat has his groove, his thing, his calling, you dig? If one of these character types is your style, solid. Take the special points and starting money like it says. You can spend your dough on any far-out shit you can afford, and if you have any Wheelie Points you score a free ride, baby!

If you have something else in mind, pick three types of special points (Kung-fu, Groove, Freak-out, or Wheelie points). Dish out six points between them, but don't try puttin' more than four points in one pile, sucka!

Cowboy

Not every cat on the scene is a far-out, funky hipster. Cowboys prefer bars to disco, Fords to Ferraris and fistfights to dance-offs. You'd best show them some respect, else they just might knock you out.

Hard Drinker: You can hold your liquor better than any sissy city-boy. You get +4 to Maintain checks when you're hittin' the bottle, but -2 when you're dealing with other funky stuff. When you're drunk, you get +2 to all Tough checks.

Cowboys start with:

2 Kung-fu points
2 Groove points
2 Freak-out points

10 bucks

Detective

Detectives are hard-ass agents of justice. He takes the law into his own hands whenever he needs to and don't take shit from no one. When a Detective's on your ass he ain't never giving up.

Got a Funny Feeling: When somethin' ain't right, you know exactly what's gone down, or at least enough to make a sharp guess. You can roll the bones and make a Funk check to put the puzzle pieces together.

Detectives start with:

3 Kung-fu points
1 Freak-out point
2 Wheelie points

20 bucks

Disco King

Disco Kings (and Disco Queens) know how to get down, who to talk to, and where to find the most far-out threds. In they daylight he may not be much, but under a disco ball those rhinestones shine, baby!

Saturday Night: You own the dance floor, baby, and that's all there is to it. Roll a Boogie check to start a synchronized, energized, galvanized dance movement and get the whole club following your moves.

Disco Kings start with:

1 Kung-fu point
4 Groove points
1 Freak-out point

10 bucks

Hustler

Hustlers are the pimps, players, and bad motherfuckers of the world. Whether they gotta bust a sucka in the chops or cruise around in their smooth rides, every last one of them does it with style.

The Look: All you gotta do is glare at a punk and he runs away cryin'. You get +2 to all Staredown rolls.

Hustlers start with:

2 Kung-fu points
3 Groove points
1 Wheelie point

20 bucks

Leftover

These far-out cats have been opening their minds since the last decade, and it shows. A Leftover's preferred ride is his trusty van, and his favorite sport is parking on the grass.

Master of the Stash: You've learned how to hide things DAMN well. Take a +2 hit to checks for keeping things hidden (or finding things) under your hat... or in your pockets, pants, socks, shoes, a dumpster on 5th street, your afro, or behind your ear, as the FunkMaster approves.

Leftovers start with:

1 Groove point
4 Freak-out points
1 Wheelie point

5 bucks

Long-Hauler

Ain't nobody knows the open road like the Long-Hauler. These dudes are tough as nails and ain't afraid to throw a punch, so you best watch what you toss in the truck-stop jukebox, sucka.

Back Door, 10-4: You get around, and you know folks just about everywhere. When you're in your rig you can roll a Cruise check to find a buddy (or six).

Long-Haulers start with:

2 Kung-fu points
2 Freak-out points
2 Wheelie points

10 bucks

Motorhead

Some cats cruise for chicks, and some cats jump motorcycles over flaming buses. The Motorhead is your drag racer, your stunt driver, your grease monkey, and probably all three at the same time, you dig?

Blaze of Glory: You're ready to put it all on the line at the drop of a hat. You can burn a Wheelie point to automatically succeed in a crazy stunt, as long as you've got wheels under you.

Motorheads start with:

1 Kung-fu point
2 Groove point
3 Wheelie points

10 bucks

New-Ager

Whether it's astrology, auras, or aliens, New-Agers are into a lot of far-out bags. You won't find him without his crystals and spiritual guides, but he can always chill out a room with a mellow vibe.

Aquarian: You're down with all the freaky happenings the Age of Aquarius is bringing. Keep your cool with +4 to all checks involving the supernatural, the metaphysical, or the extra-terrestrial.

New-Agers start with:

2 Groove points
3 Freak-out points
1 Wheelie point

5 bucks

Wanderer

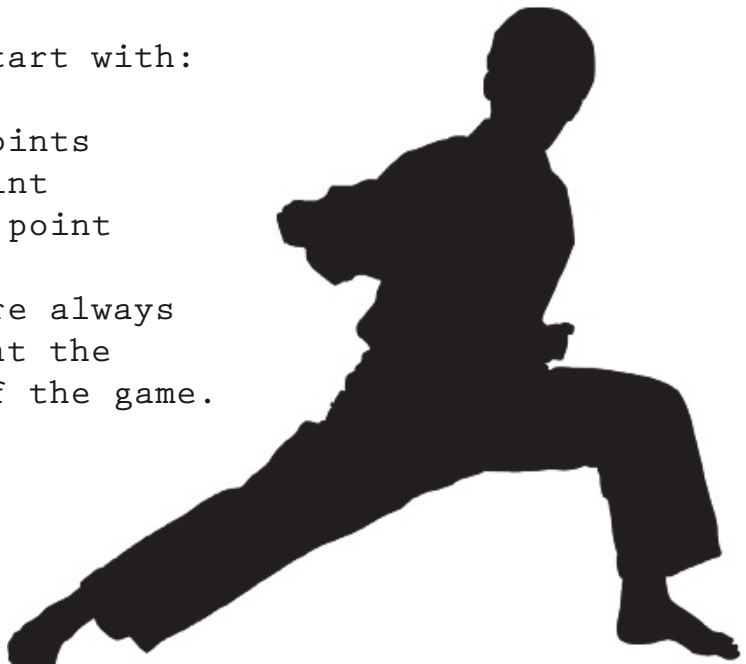
Some people are born in the Orient, and some down-home hustlers are born with the spirit of the dragon inside them. These mysterious cats wander the world, looking for some heavy ideas like enlightenment and finding plenty of action along the way.

Soul Soles: No ride? No problem. You're used to hoofin' it, and you're badass enough to look good doing it. You never get dissed for your lack of wheels, and you get +1 to your Tough rating from all that walking. You also get +2 to Outrun checks.

Wanderers start with:

4 Kung-fu points
1 Groove point
1 Freak-out point

Wanderers are always flat broke at the beginning of the game.



Chapter 4:
Style

J&J characters start the game with their scores for Hair, Shades, and Threds already set. These scores can change during the course of the game.

If a player loses his shades or threds (or something happens to them) he's gotta replace them or have a score of 0. Same thing if his hair gets mussed.

Example:

Curtis is wearing his Tight Shades (Shades score: 2) and Fine Threds (Threds score: 3). This means his Tough rating is 5 (Shades + Threds).

Curtis busts out some kung-fu and takes out the thugs in the warehouse, but his Funk rating drops to 1 and the FunkMaster decides that his threds are ruined. Curtis takes his torn and blood-stained shirt off, and his Threds score drops to 0 (and his Tough rating drops by 3).

He can find some clothes around, but they're Square Threds (Threds score: 1). When he puts them on his Threds score goes from 0 to 1 (and his Tough rating goes up by 1). Not good, but better than nothin'.

You can wear more than one set of threds at a time, but you're only gonna use the lowest Threds score for your Tough rating, sucka.

Accessories

A solid cat can boost his Tough rating with some fine accessories. They can be worn with any other threds. Some of them raise more than your Tough rating.

Just like threds, your Tough or Boogie ratings ain't gettin' any higher by putting on more than one of each kind of accessory. That means one pair of kicks, one piece of gold, and one pair of shades, fool.

Shades

$1 Dimestore Shades
Shades score: 1
Man, get yourself some better shades.

$20 Tight Shades
Shades score: 2
These shades are tight and all-right.

$100 Fine Shades
Shades score: 3
Damn! These are some fine shades.

$250 Outtasight Shades
Shades score: 4
Outtasight! You don't see shades like these every day, brother.

Threds

$10 Square Threds
Threds score: 1
Only suckas wear Square Threds, dummy!

$50 Slick Threds
Threds score: 2
These are some slick threds.

$150 Fine Threds
Threds score: 3
You keep a stone groove goin' on with these threds.

Headwear

Cowboy Hat
$50
Threds score: 1
This hat says you're a serious player.

Neckwear

Gold Chain
$50
Threds score: 1
A little gold goes a long way, baby. But not too much: only the first Gold Chain counts toward your Threds score.

Special Threds

Special Threds are special, get it? No player is gonna start out with these threds; a cat's gotta earn 'em the hard way.

Disco Threds
$200
Threds score: 2

Disco threds are tight and outta sight. These ain't for walkin' around, dig? Any honky that wears these threds outside a disco has his Funk rating halved. But when you need to bust out on the dance floor, Disco Threds up your Boogie rating by 1.

Rhinestone Disco Threds
$500
Threds score: 3

Ain't no dancing clothes more fine than Rhinestone Disco Threds. Slip these on and watch your Boogie rating slide up by 2. Just like regular Disco Threds, cats that wear them outside lose their funk.

Leisure Suit
$100
Threds score: 1

A leisure suit lets you get down at the disco, but you can still wear it in public like any boss outfit. Your Boogie rating gets upped by 1, and you don't lose any funk!

Kung-fu Threds
Special
Threds score: 4

These fly robes are bestowed by some mystical Eastern cats, but only on those they deem superfly. Kung-fu threds are so bad-assed they up your Funk score by 2.

Special Accessories

Same as Special Threds, these fine pieces ain't gettin' picked up when you first start playing. You either save up the scratch for 'em or find 'em along the way, dig?

Headwear

Plain Headband
$10
Threds score: 1

> Only cats with at least 4 Kung-fu points (total, not current) can benefit from this headband.

Kung-fu Headband
Special
Threds score: 1

> Just like Kung-fu Threds, the Kung-fu Headband can't be bought. And just like the Plain Headband, only cats with at least 4 Kung-fu points can benefit. Tying on this mystic headband ups your Funk by 1. Solid.

Neckwear

Medallion
$50
Threds score: 0

> A medallion ain't gonna raise your Thread score, but it ups your Boogie rating by 1. It's gravy, baby!

Hippie Beads
Special
Threds score: 0

> This relic of the '60s has been imbued with cosmic insight. In the hands of someone trying to Maintain, it grants an extra Freak-out point.

Footwear

Boogie Shoes
$150
Threds score: 0

Boogie Shoes are strictly for the dance floor. Your Tough rating drops by 1 when they're on your feet, but your Boogie rating goes up a point.

Cowboy Boots
$100
Threds score: 1

A serious player needs some serious kicks.

Motorcycle Boots
$200
Threds score: 1

These solid boots can take the heat. They up your Threds rating, sure, but they also add +1 to all your Drive checks.

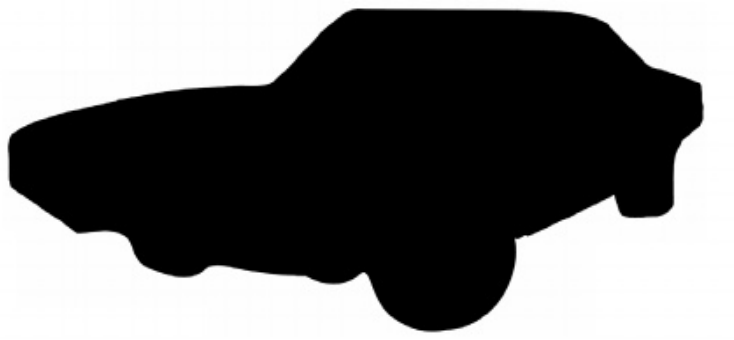
Heat & ‘chucks

$20 Pistol	Ammo: 6	Damage: 6
$50 Nice pistol	Ammo: 6	Damage: 8
$50 Shotgun	Ammo: 8	Damage: 10
$200 Machine gun	Ammo: 100	Damage: 10
$20 Cane		Damage: 6
$50 Nunchucks		Damage: 8
$5 Switchblade		Damage: 6
$100 Sword		Damage: 8

Shots, Pills, & Tabs

	Cost	Funk rating	Effects of failed Maintain check
Beer	$1	3	
Whisky	$1	5	Fall asleep
Mickey	free	10	Knocks you out cold
Acid/shrooms	$5	1-10	Communion with higher beings
Coke	$20	4-10	-1 Funk
Weed	$5	1-10	Munchies
Pills	$5	5-10	-1 Boogie

Wheels



Wheels ain't handled the same as shirts and hats. The FunkMaster might let you start with a ride, but if he says no, that don't mean you can't pick one up later.

Wheels have their own ratings, from Junker to Funker. Just like the Cool meter shows how far-out or tight with the Man you are, the Wheels meter shows where your ride starts out. If it says Green 5, it starts on the far-right side of the bar. If it says Yellow 1, put your mark on the far-left yellow box.

Wheels can't go higher than what it says unless you trick it out, but just how you do that is up to you and the FunkMaster.

If your ride gets scratched, the FunkMaster might knock it down a peg. You run through a street market and crash out a window, he might drop it all the way to the bottom, dig? Once your ride is all Junker, it's blown-out, broke-down, and out of gas for one day.

A righteous player can drive a beat-up ride no problem, but you gonna get laughed at by every honky in town, and ain't no fly honey is gonna stop to talk to a sucka cruisin' around in a wreck.

Your Boogie rating for Cruise checks goes down by 1 if your car's in the yellow, and 2 if it's in the red.

Big Rig
$1000
Green 5

Ain't nothing bigger than a big rig, sucka. You can fit just about anything inside a trailer, even another ride.

Cruising Wheels
$300
Green 2

If you wanna cruise around in style, get yourself a wide ride, baby. This car is so smooth and fly you get +2 to all Cruise checks.

Hippie Van
$30
Yellow 3

These vans ain't for cruising, they're for parking, dig? Any cat in a hippie van moves his cool rating two more spaces toward the far-out. There's somethin' about those beads, though: light up in here and you get +2 to your Maintain check.

Motorcycle
$200
Green 1

When you gotta hit the road, get on your hog and jam on the gas. If you're on a bike you get +1 to all your Cruise and Drive checks.

Muscle Car
$500
Green 3

When you're in this ride, you can jam on the pedal and get +2 to all Driving checks. But Smokey ain't gonna pass up chasin' down that sweet paint job: when you're behind the wheel your cool meter is one step farther from The Man.

Plain Ride
$30
Yellow 5

Ain't nothin' special about this ride, honky. Might be a good thing: if you bump into The Man he has to roll twice to see if you're cool.

Stretch Limousine
$500
Green 2

When you roll up in a long white limo you know every chick is gonna want to hop in. If a player's riding in the back of a stretch limousine he gets +2 to all his Cruise checks.

Shag Wagon
$200
Green 1

This swingin' love-nest on wheels makes all the honeys ready to get wild. A cat parked in a shag wagon gets +1 to all Boogie checks. Looks are everything, though: all it takes is a little scratch and your ride loses its magic.

Pick-up Truck
$50
Green 3

Smooth cats don't go cruisin' with two doors and a tailgate, but when you pull into the roadhouse parking lot in a pick-up truck people know you're serious. A player who shows up in this ride has his Boogie rating knocked down by one, but his Tough rating goes up a notch as long as he's next to it.

Squaremobile
$20
Yellow 2

Anyone cruising around in this sardine can better be wearing shades. If that sucka is you, move your mark two steps closer to The Man.

Chapter 5:
The FunkMaster

Rule 1:

What the FunkMaster says, goes.

This ain't no Lawyers & Legal Proceedings (that's coming out next year). In this game, all the players worry about is keeping their funk.

Can you wear a Plain Headband and a Kung-fu Headband at the same time? If the FunkMaster says so. Can you roll a Boogie check instead of a Funk check to make a dance attack? Sure, if the FunkMaster gives his OK. Don't be a bitch.

Rule 2:

Keep the funk.

See that bar at the top of the character sheet? 'Course you do. You been starin' at it the whole time. That's your Cool meter.

Players start out in the purple area, but where exactly is up to them. Based on their actions, the FunkMaster might tell a player to move their mark one way or the other.

Once they get close to The Man's side, far-out types start to, like, majorly distrust them. Cross over to the Far-out side, and the pigs start hasslin' you with no reason.

To find out what some stranger thinks about you, the FunkMaster decides where the other dude is on the meter and rolls a d6. If he can reach your mark from his by moving that many spaces (or less), you're tight (or at least cool). If there's too much distance, he ain't buyin', dig?

NAME _____ HANDLE _____

OUTFIT _____

STATS	GEAR	
___Athletics	_____	_____
___Computers	_____	_____
___Guns	_____	_____
___Health	_____	_____
___Phreaking	_____	_____
___Presence	_____	_____
___Talking	_____	_____
10 Unique	_____	_____

REPUTATION

_____

_____

_____

_____

PERSONALITY

_____

_____

_____

_____

BACKGROUND

_____

_____

_____

_____

$15.00
MODEMPUNK
(c) 1986 Viral Games

Modempunk
1986 Viral Games

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For P01s0n, Amy, DuctTape and Switchblade

Someday we'll get out of that bunker.

*EEEEE-EEEEE-EEEEE-EEEEE-KKKKKKSHHHHHHHHHHH-
EEEEEEEEEEE-SHHHHHHHHHHH-VRRRRRRRRR-SHHHH*

Monty leaned in, his face reflecting in the murky gray curve of glass, characters bathing his features in monochromatic green. The][E purred underneath the monitor as the light flickered, all 110 ks of data crossing over at a speed he wouldn't have even dreamed of five years ago. He spun his chair around and checked the television monitor. Somebody had Astley'd him - Monty kicked back and watched the flickering rendition, feet tapping along to the approximated midi beat.

Someone banged on his door. Monty turned down the volume dial on the television and spun around. "Who is it?"

"It's Christie!" a female voice yelled from the other side. "Open up, asshole!"

Monty smirked and propelled his chair backward, rolling the short distance across the cramped room to grab the door handle and twist it open. Suddenly she was inside - five foot nine inches, with hair that took it up another three and spread out like a corona around her head. Loud and vital with the ripped neck of her white RELAX shirt down almost to her elbow. A modified Walkman was strapped to her thigh like a pistolero's prized revolver.

She slammed the door, kicking up the paper taped to the inside. A dot-matrix rendition of Mary Lou Retton with the caption NOT! fluttered and settled back down.

"They fucking passed it! This is so fucking not cool." She tossed the box of disks in her hand onto his lap and leaned over him to tap out a cybersite code. His nostrils were infused with the scent of L.A. Looks. "Stare hard, retard," she murmured hoarsely, the fabric of her t-shirt stretching as she pressed into him.

The cursor blinked for a few seconds before the screen flooded with letters, as a four-color image of the Big Cheese filled in the top right corner.

PRESIDENT REAGAN SIGNS TELECOMPUTER LAW
UNLICENSED ELECTRONIC INFORMATION ILLEGAL

"So what's on the disks?" Monty asked, leaning back to read over the side of Christie's hair. On the screen, the characters spelled out the end of the free world. Everything in this room was now punishable by fines, jail time, forcible service, or exportation to one of the corporate colonies overseas to spend a few years plugging code at gunpoint. The Man had finally come down on what the kids had been up to in the last decade or so, ever since the grad students at MIT and their home tape readers.

"Birthday present," she said, stretching back up. "I want a smoke. Let's go outside."

Monty glanced at her as she moved toward the door, then to the box, now slightly tilted on his lap, before picking it up and setting it on the desk. He tapped out an exit command as Christie bent down to relace her boot. The computer honked at him and he glanced back at the screen, retyping the command.

QUIT EVERYTHING?
Y/N

Out on the street, Monty slouched along past nearly-naked mannequins and giant screens blaring ads. The scrolling lines on the screens made his brain ache. The press of traffic on the sidewalk buffeted him from side to side as Christie strode next to him, oblivious to the people that parted around her. She took a drag and blew an acrid cloud into the face of a streetside laserdisc vendor that tried to stop her, driving him back cursing, the copy of Moonwalker tumbling to the ground.

The giant screens on the Panasonic building were showing loops of smiles and handshakes. Twenty feet in front of him, a pair of thugs in riot gear pummeled a couple of afro-headed kids while a third smashed open their plastic case, sending floppy discs fluttering to the ground. The wind caught some and sent them cartwheeling into traffic. As the sheep approached they knotted up, crossing in two neat single-file lines, eyes straight ahead. Monty caught a blip of a garbled protest from one of the kids through a mouth of blood.

The street was mostly empty - the ones that could afford to drive around didn't do it during the daytime around here, where they were as likely to be carjacked as have their tires slashed at an intersection. Monty tried to remember the last time that he had ridden in a car. His parents had owned one, back before the Arabs started pinching off the oil.

It had come at a bad time. Poor people that would have spent their meager earnings on immediate gratifications could get their entertainment for free if they knew how. The technology was already out there, and people had the incentive to learn. The entertainment industry was drying up, and as more people turned to pirated information, the cycle was... what?

Exponential?

Monty didn't know.

AN ALTERNATE HISTORY OF THE COMPUTER AGE

If you're reading this, I'm going to assume that you already know how shit got to be this way. I've heard some people call it bogue, but that's just putting a sticker on it. Whatever you want to call it doesn't explain the fallout in Hanoi or why you can't buy a tank of gas without a MasterCard or why you need a permit to own a computer.

Anyway, you know the drill. Pick your handle (or better yet, do something to earn one). Do your time in the sneakernet. Ditch class. Don't trust anyone older than you. Put together some toys and take them on a bombing run. Get laid. Crack the system. Break the country.

Just say No.

> 2X7u53r
> 10/8/86

Modempunk is played using a single 12-sided die, referred to as "the d12".

Your character has 8 stats:

Athletics	Computers
Guns	Health
Phreaking	Presence
Talking	Unique

Every stat is rated on a scale between 1-10. Roll the d12; if you get your stat or less you succeed.

All of your stats start at 1, and you get 25 points to spread between Athletics, Computers, Guns, Health, Phreaking, Presence and Talking.

The Unique stat is different. You don't put any points into it when creating your character, and your Unique stat is always 10.

The equipment you use (and the equipment your adversaries use) brings your stats up and down for the purpose of that attempt. A modified Walkman with a few nebulously described features may raise your Phreaking stat by 2 when the GM says it's applicable. Heavy government security on an army mainframe would lower your Computers stat by 5 whenever you tried to hack into it.

Example: Christie has a modified Walkman that raises her Phreaking stat by +3. Her normal Phreaking stat is 7, and her modified Walkman raises it to 10 whenever she can use it in a Phreaking check. Right now, she's using it to spoof a pay phone into giving her a free call.

The pay phone lowers her Phreaking stat by 1, so for the purposes of this check her final stat is 9 (7+3-1).

Christie rolls the d12 and gets a 5. She puts her Red Box tape and holds the earphones up to the telephone, and a moment later the operator comes on asking where she wants to connect to.

Automatic Success:
If your total modifiers bring a stat to 12 or higher, the attempt is an automatic success with no need to roll the d12.

Automatic Failure:
A 1 is not always a success. If the number needed for success is less than 1, then the task is impossible for that character, no matter what they roll on the d12.

YOUR STATS

These eight numbers sum up what your character is good and bad at. A stat of 6 is average, meaning the character will succeed in the action about half the time.

ATHLETICS

Athletics involves running, skateboarding, punching, swimming, and pretty much any other type of physical activity.

Example: Mikey sprints down the street clutching the cardboard box to his chest. Behind the thumping of blood in his ears, he can hear the police yelling and whistling. As he rounds the corner, the topmost disks slide off the stacks and tumble away.

COMPUTERS

Computers involves writing codes, hacking, and general knowledge of systems and software.

Example: Brendon taps out the cybersite code for backdoor access to the DoD server and enters the run command for his codebreaking program. The three teenagers lean forward, staring at the blinking cursor. ACCESS GRANTED.

GUNS

Guns are things you shoot.

Example: Amy clutches the pistol and clenches the trigger. A deafening bang is instantly followed by a shower of papers cascading down from the shelf.

HEALTH

Health covers your stamina (from overexertion, poison, alcohol, or bullets).

Example: Wade tips his eighth shot back and taps the glass against the half-empty bottle. “Your turn.”

PHREAKING

Phreaking involves subverting infrastructure like telephones to your own ends.

Ex: Lucy slips into the alley and quietly pries open the router box bolted to the side of the building. Humming to herself, she clips a pair of wires to it and presses the PLAY button on her autodialer. "Hope you lame-oids didn't need your phone today," she smirks as she dials the police station.

PRESENCE

Presence is how commanding and interest-capturing you are.

Ex: Natalie stands outside the front window of a business, pretending to examine her outfit in the reflection. Meanwhile, her friend loitering in the lobby manages to slip into the restroom while the security guard is occupied.

TALKING

Talking measures your ability to bullshit, either in real life or over a modem.

Ex: Henry squints as the cop shines the flashlight from the back seat and his face. "I'm just borrowing my mom's car, and uh, these tapes are all stuff that goes to the bookmobile."

UNIQUE

Your Unique stat lets you pull off something awesome that your character could conceivably do, like whipping out a floppy with a virus on it at just the right time, or disguising yourself as a secretary to infiltrate a business. The GM can decide whether or not what you want is possible.

You can roll your Unique stat twice per game. Unlike other stats, your Unique stat is always 10 (before any modifiers). You don't need to specify what your Unique stat is - it's something to call on when you need a miracle.

COMBAT

Combat in Modempunk can be pretty deadly, especially when guns are thrown into the mix.

Every character has Life points. Your life point total is equal to your Health stat +3, and decreases when you are injured.

Punching or kicking damage alone usually can't kill someone - only knock them out. If you lose your last life point from punching or kicking, make a Health check +2. If you pass, roll the d12. You wake up after that many minutes.

If you fail, roll the d12 and divide by 2. You wake up after that many hours with one life point.

You heal when the GM says you heal.

If you lose your last Life point from being shot or stabbed, you're toast. It's up to the GM to decide what happens at that point. If you aren't dead, you'd better have a good excuse.

Every weapon has a modifier that changes the stat you use to attack with it. Brawling weapons like clubs and knives have modifiers that change your Athletics stat. Guns have modifiers that change your Guns stat.

Ex: A pistol has a Guns modifier of +2. If Amy's Guns stat is 3, then her Guns stat counts as 5 when she's using a pistol. On the other hand, a machine gun has a Guns modifier of -3. There's just no way she can handle that.

Some awkward weapons - like a brick or a wooden board - impose a penalty on the Athletics stat because they're hard to hold or use. Some guns are hard to use or control - these lower your Guns stat.

FIGHTING:

To hit, kick, or stab someone, roll Athletics (adding any modifiers for a weapon if you have one). If you succeed, you roll the d12 and divide the result by 2 (round down). The damage modifier is added after this.

Ex: Charlie pulls out her switchblade and slashes at the grinning dusthead. Her Athletics stat is 6, and her knife raises it to 9. She rolls the d12 and gets a 4. She successfully slashes at him.

She rolls the d12 for damage, and it comes up 7. She divides this by two (rounding down), which gives her 3, then adds the knife's damage (+2). Her switchblade slices open his stomach and he collapses into an overflowing trash can.

GUNS:

Every gun has a modifier to your Guns stat. Usually, this raises your Guns stat, making it more likely that your roll will be equal or less than your stat. Every gun has a modifier to its Damage.

To fire a gun, you roll your Guns skill (adding any modifier from your gun to your Guns stat). If you succeed, you roll the d12 and add your gun's Damage. Don't divide your roll's result - guns do the full d12 damage.

WEAPON	Athletics	Damage
Club	+2	+2
Garrote	+2	+4
Knife	+3	+2
Sword	+1	+3

WEAPON	Guns	Damage
Machine gun	-3	+5
Pistol	+1	+1
Rifle	+2	+2
Shotgun	+3	+3
Uzi	-1	+3

FINISHING TOUCHES

DESIGNING GEAR:

As a general rule, any gear that a character can easily carry on them will give a +1 to a +3 bonus to a stat. Typical Modempunk characters start the game with 4 points of gear.

A piece of gear can boost a stat by a max of +3. Multiple pieces of gear cannot be combined to increase this (so don't bother taking a pair of +2 blue boxes in the hopes of getting a +4 to Phreaking).

WEAPONS AS GEAR

If you want a weapon, look at its damage bonus.

Fighting weapons (knives, clubs, and garrotes) cost half their damage, rounded up (so if you have a knife, it counts as 1 point worth of gear).

Guns cost their damage (so owning a shotgun means that you get one more +1 worth of gear, and machine guns are unavailable when starting out).

BODY ARMOR

Generally, characters don't start with anything but street clothes. If you happen to find something better, here are some guidelines:

>A Kevlar vest removes 4 points of damage from gunshots.

>Riot armor (which includes a helmet) removes 6 points of damage from melee attacks and three points from gunshots.

YOUR SHEET

Reputation is literally what other people you know think of you. Are you a closeted weirdo that girls point and laugh at, or are you the most popular girl in detention hall?

Personality and Background should be self-explanatory.

GM SECTION

There isn't much to say here. If you've made it this far, you probably have a good idea of what this game is all about.

Keep it fast-paced. Don't get bogged down with modifiers. The player figures out their stat modifier; you decide if there's a penalty.

"Who shoots first?" depends on what the GM decides. You can rule that one party gets the drop on the other, or make both sides roll an Athletics or Guns check and say the side with the better roll goes first, or just make everyone roll the d12 for acting order. In that last case, remember that tied results can be pretty dramatic and/or hilarious.

ATMOSPHERE NOTES:

Keep the hardware (and the tone) firmly in the 1980s.

Home computer monitors are usually two- or four-color, but adapters can be made to allow televisions to be used as screens.

"Portable" computers weigh at least 5 pounds.

Pop culture is essentially the same in this world as in ours - the same cultural figures, brand names, etc.

The kids have come up with a lot of novel workarounds for technology limitations. The players should have some leeway with regard to what their electronics can do. Floppy disks can hold as much or as little as the story calls for.

Electronic bootlegs are lower quality than "official" media, but they're free and uncensored.

Here's how the probabilities of the d12 break down, if you're interested:

#	Chance of Success
1	8.3%
2	16%
3	25%
4	33%
5	42%
6	50%
7	58%
8	66%
9	75%
10	83%
11	92%
12	100%